

Immunization & Infectious Disease Policy for Higher Education Students in Health Care Related Fields

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Health-related students have a higher standard

- Students in health-related courses bear a higher ethical and practical burden of proof that they are not at personal risk, or putting vulnerable populations at risk, of vaccine preventable infectious disease.
- Students in health-related fields may be provisionally enrolled in any course, if “...*the student has received at least one dose of each specified vaccine prior to enrollment and goes on to complete each vaccination series on schedule in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Recommended Adult Immunization Schedule...*” This implies that the student may not be enrolled at all until starting immunizations.
- Provisionally enrolled students may not participate in coursework activity “...*which will involve direct patient contact with potential exposure to blood or bodily fluids in educational, medical, or dental care facilities*” until completing all required series.
- Exclusions from compliance with the requirements are found in the Texas Administrative Code Rule §97.62

Valid Documentation

It is the student’s responsibility to produce valid documentation for immunization requirements. The MSU College of Health Science will maintain infectious disease surveillance and immunization requirements that meet or exceed requirements of the State of Texas.

Documentation of immunizations must be:

- Complete
- Legible
- Correctly dated
- Signed or stamped by a physician or designee, or public health personnel

When the documentation reflects an immunization status that is unclear or deviates from standard practice, the Vinson Health Center medical director will do individual chart review. Adjudication of these situations will reflect a predisposition towards assuring an unassailably clear record of immunizations; this will protect the students’ health, the patient’s health, and societal interests, and it will enhance future employability. The resolutions developed for these circumstances will not be open for debate.

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Tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis

Requirement:

Td or Tdap documented in the last 10 years, and at least one dose of Tdap after age 10.

Bacterial Meningitis

Requirement:

The student must meet current requirements for higher education students as legislated in Texas:

An entering student less than 22 years of age must show evidence of receipt of an initial bacterial meningitis vaccination dose or booster during the five-year period preceding and at least 10 days prior to the first day of the first semester in which the student initially enrolls at an institution, or following a break in enrollment of at least one fall or spring semester at the same or another institution.

Hepatitis B

Requirement:

- Complete Hepatitis B series (3 doses) prior to any patient contact, and serologic confirmation of immunity, or, if negative serology after the initial series
 - Single booster with subsequent serologic confirmation of immunity or
 - 2 complete Hepatitis B series (6 shots) with serologic evidence of immunity, or
 - Non-responder status as demonstrated by
 - Negative serologic evidence of immunity (negative HBsAb)
 - Negative evidence of infection (negative HBsAg)

Influenza

Requirement:

- One dose of influenza vaccine annually, unless clear medical contraindication

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Measles/mumps/rubella

**Note that MMR is an attenuated live virus vaccine. 95-98% of individuals born before 1957 have been exposed to measles and mumps and are immune; furthermore, the development and introduction of the measles, mumps, and rubella components occurred over a span of years from 1963 to 1969, culminating with the introduction of the combination vaccine known as the MMR in 1971. Consequently, the immunization requirements are different for those born before 1957 versus those born 1957 and later, and the potential for immunization with less effective killed virus vaccines prior to 1968 requires that live virus vaccines be specified.*

Requirement:

- Serologic evidence of immunity to all three (measles, mumps, and rubella), or
- Born before 1957:
 - Presumed immune
- Born in 1957 or later:
 - 2 doses of a measles containing live attenuated vaccine (preferably the MMR)
 - At least 1 dose of a mumps containing live attenuated vaccine
 - At least 1 dose of a rubella containing live attenuated vaccine

Varicella (chicken pox) vaccine

Requirement:

Serologic evidence of immunity, or

- 1 dose of varicella vaccine after 1st birthday and before 13th birthday and a second dose at least 3 months later
- 2 doses of varicella vaccine at least 28 days apart if initiated on or after 13th birthday
- A written statement from a parent (or legal guardian or managing conservator), school nurse, or physician attesting to a child's positive history of varicella disease (chickenpox), or of varicella immunity, is acceptable in lieu of a vaccine record for that disease. Specific wording is required. Forms are available in the Vinson Health Center.

Tuberculosis screening

See document: Tuberculosis – Exposure control plan for healthcare educators and students